

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

CONTACT: Lisa Y. Gross
Office - (502) 564-2015
Cellular - (502) 330-5063
lisa.gross@education.ky.gov

KENTUCKY COUNCIL ON POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

CONTACT: Sue Patrick
Office - (502) 573-1555
sue.patrick@ky.gov

No. 10-044

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 18, 2010

****NOTE TO EDITORS AND REPORTERS: ACT DOES NOT PROVIDE DISTRICT- OR
SCHOOL-LEVEL SCORES TO THE KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.****

2010 PUBLIC SCHOOL GRADUATES' ACT DATA RELEASED

(FRANKFORT, Ky.) – Average ACT scores for Kentucky's 2010 public high school graduates were mostly unchanged from those in 2009, although more students met college-ready benchmarks in mathematics and science, the Kentucky Department of Education and the Council on Postsecondary Education announced today.

"This data is a crucial component of Kentucky's efforts to implement next-generation learning strategies," said Kentucky Education Commissioner Terry Holliday. "Parents and the public agree that students must be prepared for life after high school, and schools must have strong expectations for their students. Kentucky is adopting a new accountability system that focuses on improving the college-and career-ready rates for Kentucky high school graduates. While numerous regulations and support mechanisms will be put in place, the ultimate work is in every school and district in Kentucky."

"Our colleges and universities are committed to increasing the college and career readiness of all our high school graduates," said Council on Postsecondary Education President Robert King. "Beginning this fall, campuses will ramp up a full range of targeted intervention programs that we anticipate will improve college readiness for students who need more intervention. Our strong partnership with the Kentucky Department of Education, recent legislation and the good work of our campuses will pave the way for more students to be equipped for the 21st-century economy."

(more)

Visit our Web site at <http://www.education.ky.gov>.

ACT, Inc. developed College Readiness Benchmarks in English, mathematics, science and reading, with research indicating that students who reach those have a 50 percent chance of obtaining a B or higher or about a 75 percent chance of obtaining a C or higher in the corresponding credit-bearing college course. The benchmark scores are:

- 18 or higher on the ACT English Test
- 22 or higher on the ACT Mathematics Test
- 21 or higher on the ACT Reading Test
- 24 or higher on the ACT Science Test

PERCENTAGES OF KENTUCKY PUBLIC SCHOOL GRADUATES MEETING ACT BENCHMARKS

	2009	2010
English	52%	52%
Mathematics	24%	25%
Reading	39%	37%
Science	18%	19%
All Four	13%	14%

Some of the low percentages of Kentucky public school students meeting the benchmarks can be attributed to the larger population of students who took the ACT and to some students' status as 11th graders who have not yet completed all of the credits necessary for graduation.

The number of public high school graduates taking the ACT increased slightly, from 40,906 in 2009 to 41,277 in 2010. To compile information for the release of 2010 graduating class data, ACT, Inc. used students' scores from the last time they took the test. Since the ACT is administered to all Kentucky public high school juniors, some of those students may not have taken the ACT again as 12th graders.

(NOTE: The scores in this data release should not be compared to the scores released for Kentucky public school juniors on August 12. The groups represented in the two data releases are not comprised of the same students. Scores from this data release also should not be compared to data prior to 2009 because of the addition of more students and because of the inclusion of non-public students' scores in earlier data collections.)

(more)

Visit our Web site at <http://www.education.ky.gov>.

The 2010 composite ACT score for Kentucky public school students is 19.0, compared to 2009's composite of 19.1. Nationally, the 2010 composite score is 21.0, and the composite for 2009 was 21.1. The national composite score includes both public and non-public school test-takers.

	2009	2010
Kentucky Public School Students Tested	40,906	41,277
English Average Score	18.3	18.3
Mathematics Average Score	18.7	18.8
Reading Average Score	19.4	19.2
Science Average Score	19.4	19.2
Composite	19.1	19.0

The overall ACT Assessment consists of tests in four areas: English, mathematics, reading and science reasoning. ACT, Inc. recommends that college-bound students take four or more years of English; three or more years of mathematics (including Algebra 1, Algebra 2 and geometry); three or more years of social studies; and three or more years of natural sciences. ACT, Inc. defines specific courses in these areas. Kentucky's graduation requirements define four credits in English; three in mathematics; three in social studies; three in science; one in history and appreciation of visual and performing arts; and one-half each in health and physical education.

Many Kentucky colleges and universities use ACT scores to inform admissions decisions and to place students in appropriate college courses. ACT scores also are used, along with high school grade point averages, to determine the amount of money high school graduates are eligible to receive through the Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarship program.

In comparing Kentucky with the nation, the widest gaps in performance among students were in overall English and mathematics scores (2.2 points), and the smallest was in science (1.7 points).

Kentucky's African-American public school students' average composite score was 0.5 points lower than the national average for African-American students. Composite scores for non-white public school students increased, but gaps between the performance of ethnic minority and white students persisted.

(more)

Visit our Web site at <http://www.education.ky.gov>.

AVERAGE KENTUCKY PUBLIC SCHOOL ACT COMPOSITE SCORES BY ETHNICITY – 2009 & 2010

	2009		2010	
	#	Score	#	Score
African American	3,624	16.3	3,896	16.4
American Indian	677	15.8	167	16.7
Asian	505	21.0	497	22.5
Hispanic	935	17.1	846	17.6
White	31,707	19.6	32,293	19.4
Other/No Response	3,458	17.8	3,578	18.0

The composite score gaps between public school males and females of all ethnic groups in Kentucky were minimal in most subjects, with males posting a composite score of 18.8 and females a score of 19.2. On ACT, which offers only multiple-choice questions, males tend to outscore females in mathematics and science, and females tend to outscore males in English and reading.

Kentucky is one of only a few states that has implemented the Educational Planning and Assessment System (EPAS) from ACT, Inc. and, through 2006's Senate Bill 130, administers the ACT to all public school juniors. The state assesses public school 8th graders using the EXPLORE test and assesses public school 10th graders with the PLAN test through EPAS.

##